

the House floor, is a requirement that every business in America, beginning January 1 of next year, 2011, will have to file a 1099-MISC for any transaction that exceeds \$600 during the course of the year.

So what does that mean? You've got a business that goes to Staples. They're going to have to keep track of every transaction that they made. If you buy, as a business, \$50 a month from Staples, you are going to have to file a 1099. If you've got a sales force, maybe they go out to a bunch of hotels or restaurants during the course of the year, you are going to have to find every one of those for all of your employees.

During this recent break that we were home, I met with one of my small business people in Michigan. Last year, they filed 10 1099s. They figure that next year—they have, I don't know, 30 people that work for them—they are going to have to file 350 1099s. Any business transaction that exceeds \$600 over the course of the year, they are going to have to file a 1099.

And what does that have to do with health care? How does that help the employees that are working there? Maybe they will have to hire some more people to fill out the 1099s, and they are going to be covered. Well, that's just crazy. This is a new regulation that's going to be put on businesses. It's going to cost a lot more money. If anything, it's going to take away from folks that have health care in America.

Now, we have some good news. There is a bill. My colleague DAN LUNGREN from California introduced a bill, H.R. 5141, the Small Business Paperwork Mandate Elimination Act. Just on the title, you know what that means versus what I just read at the beginning of my remarks. It takes this away. What the heck are we going to be collecting that information for? Well, somewhere else—I don't know what page it's in here, but of course it calls for the hiring of 15,000 more IRS agents. Maybe that's why they have to hire them, so they can look at all these 1099s that every business is going to have to file.

Now remember, when you do a 1099, it's more than just the amount. You're going to have to go get the Employer Identification Number for every business that you made that purchase. So, as I talked to my Kalamazoo homebuilders the last couple of times over the last couple of weeks, if they just happen to take their pickup and fill up at that Marathon or Speedway station every other week and it's going to be more than \$600 over the course of the year, they are going to have to get that Employer Identification Number and keep track of all those gas records. Think about the utilities, Consumers Energy, American Electric Power, I&M. All of the utility companies will have to do a separate 1099 for every business that they serve if they sell more than, in essence, \$50 worth of electricity a month to them.

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What a nightmare.

Now, some might suggest that this is the first step to a VAT tax. That's right. The IRS now is going to assemble all this information and maybe—and remember, it says it's effective in 2012, but that means you have to start filing beginning January 1, only 5 or 6 months from now. It's the first step. It's the wrong step. We need to repeal it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS IN CUBA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, today marks the anniversary of the horrific 13th of March tugboat massacre, in which 41 Cubans lost their lives at the hands of the Cuban regime's Coast Guard.

Risking their lives to escape from the brutal oppression of the Castro tyranny, the victims and the survivors of that attack 16 years ago symbolize the ongoing struggle of the Cuban people to be free.

This anniversary serves to remind the world that the same callous dictatorship that rammed the small tugboat and turned water cannons on innocent Cuban men, women and children so that they could fall and drown to death is the same dictatorship in power today.

This is a regime that trades political prisoners like baseball cards to manipulate public opinion and advance its brutal agenda. Do not be fooled. These are not releases. They are forced exile; means by which the tyrannical rulers in Havana seek to eliminate their opponents. And in forcibly removing them, the regime, yet again, is violating the fundamental rights of these prisoners of conscience.

Having spent years in Castro's dungeons for having the courage to stand up for the basic liberties of the Cuban people, now these brave individuals will be banished from their homeland, courtesy of the dictatorship and its accomplice, the Spanish government.

Faced with this prospect, nearly a dozen of the prisoners of conscience reported to have made the list have al-

ready expressed their refusal to leave the island upon release, including Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet, a 2007 recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Years ago Dr. Biscet wrote to his fellow comrades, his countrymen, of "a movement of complacency," to use his words, a movement that, and I quote him, "tries to make Cubans devoted to freedom believe that they should applaud and be content with receiving limited doses of freedom, a movement which suggests that we Cubans do not deserve total freedom, but only small tokens of it. This movement of low expectations speculates that other fragments of freedom and democracy will automatically follow it."

While some will use this latest farce to reward the Cuban regime, those who truly support freedom and democracy will heed the wise words of Dr. Biscet.

It is no coincidence that this latest scheme promptly follows recent legislative efforts to provide an economic lifeline to the Cuban dictatorship. It is no coincidence that Fidel Castro chose this weekend to make his first public appearance in years, or to do a television interview on the Middle East to praise the enemies of freedom while attacking our democratic ally, Israel.

But this is not the first time that the regime has used political prisoners as pawns in its pursuit of infinite power. In 1978, the regime released 3,600 political prisoners in exchange for the Carter administration's easing of sanctions on the regime. Then 26 were released for Jesse Jackson in 1984, three for Bill Richardson in 1996, another one for former President Jimmy Carter in 2002, and 80 for Pope John Paul II in 1998.

No sooner were these political prisoners freed than the cells once again were then filled with those seeking freedom from Castro's tyranny.

With a recent visit from Syria's dictator and longstanding ties with fellow state sponsor of terrorism, Iran, the tyrants of those rogue states are likely sharing trade secrets on how to best manipulate foreign nations to serve their own nefarious purposes.

Syria, like Iran, is seeking nuclear capabilities, other nonconventional weapons, ballistic missiles, and it actively supports Islamic extremists.

Similarly, Cuba provides safe haven to known extremists from around the world and continues to publicly defend violent organizations such as the FARC in Colombia.

The anti-American, anti-democratic, anti-freedom agenda that these dictators have in common presents a threat to our U.S. national security interests.

Let us not be fooled, Madam Speaker.

For the sake of all those who have been victims of the Cuban tyranny—including Americans like Alan Gross and the members of Brothers to the Rescue murdered by Castro's thugs in February 1996—the United States must not, and cannot, fall for this latest façade by the Castro regime: Until all political prisoners are liberated; all political parties, labor

unions, independent media are allowed to operate freely; and, all Cuban people are able to fully exercise their universal rights, maximum pressure must be exerted on the Cuban tyranny.

UPHOLDING THE RULE OF LAW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CARTER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, while these young folks are setting this up for me, I want to start off tonight by talking about what we've been talking about in this hour now for close to a year, and that is that the United States is a Nation of laws, not of men. It was designed by our Founding Fathers to be such. It is something we are proud to be a part of. It's something we are proud to step up to the plate and say we defend because we believe that the rule of law is more fair than having individuals set their own rules as kings and dictators do. And so, the rule of law is a sacred part of our institution.

We say that the people will elect representatives to represent them in this Congress and in State legislatures across the country and other legislative or quasi-legislative bodies to speak on their behalf, to vote on their behalf, and to set up laws and rules which establish what a civil society will be and what we will consider right and wrong in our world.

This is a simple concept, arguably, a biblical concept going back for centuries and centuries, in fact, thousands of years. There have been sets of rules in every society, every culture, and every religious background, sets of rules that are established that allows society to function.

The rule of law is important to America. In fact, it is the underpinning that allows me and other folks like me who are blessed to be able to serve in this Congress, allows us to do this job because we stand on that rock, that the law in this country is something that we enforce.

In fact, we take an oath to preserve and protect and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic. And we take that oath freely because we're saying, the basis of our legal structure, the ground rock of the rule of law, is the Constitution of the United States, which was adopted by this country and formed our Nation as we presently know it.

So we've been talking about that Members of Congress, administration people, and others need to be dealt with in the light of the rule of law, and when there are questions that should be raised, they should be raised publicly.

And so tonight, as I've done on many occasions in the past, I'm going to talk about some things that are concerning me, concerning others who care about

the rule of law. I hope to be joined by some of my colleagues here tonight.

But to start off with, I'm really concerned about what's being reported by the Obama administration, with the political backing of the Democrats in this House.

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We are arguably seeing one of the most lawless political crusades in American history. Blatantly, this administration has violated both the spirit and the letter of the law in advancing a theory of European-style socialism on State governments and on the unwilling people.

The administration's ignored two Federal court orders that have just come out, and have ignored both of them now, saying that the drilling ban in the Gulf of Mexico is arbitrary and capricious and wrong, and ordering the United States and the Secretary to withdraw and lift that drilling ban. And yet the minute these two courts, both a Federal district court and a United States court of appeals, the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals, told this administration, this President and this Secretary, that they were to lift the drilling ban and save the between 140,000 and 250,000 jobs that are connected with that industry along the entire stretch of the Gulf of Mexico, that it was arbitrary and capricious to ban all drilling and it should not be done, they immediately amend and reissue another drilling ban in the face of that court.

The administration blocks Louisiana's efforts to proceed to fight their own environmental fight by trying to throw up a little small rock barrier and a sand barrier to maybe keep the oil from getting into the marsh. It's bad enough when this oil stacks up on the beach because it makes tar balls, and it makes nastiness on that beach. It makes that beach very ugly. But you know what, it just gets on your feet and gets your feet dirty, and it just picks up.

But when it goes in the marsh, when this oil goes in the Louisiana marsh, it affects an entire ecosystem that has to do with our shrimping industry, our oyster industry, our fishing industry. It has to do with the ecosystem of the entire State and the Gulf of Mexico because there is a lot that flows in and out of that marsh that has to do with the ecosystem of the gulf. And when oil gets in amongst those grasses and amongst those habitats, it kills. On the beach it probably causes some terrible environmental impact, but nothing like going into those marshes.

So Governor Jindal says let's do something about it, and our administration blocks it. And international companies call out and say we have material to help clean up, and the administration refuses to allow them to come.

The administration refused to allow the United States Senate to conduct a single hearing over the appointment of

Dr. Berwick to head Medicare at the same time that this Congress and the President plan cutting Medicare by \$50 billion, and putting a man in charge of Medicare that there is a lot of questions that should have been asked by the Senate. But using a recess appointment, which is legal, it's legal, but in the face of what's facing Medicare and in the face of the conversation we just had earlier with Mr. UPTON about the massive burdens that are going to be created by this ObamaCare bill that has now been signed into law, and just the burdens on industry and business that are going to be put on there for really no good understandable reason, you've got to ask the question why you put a guy in there who says the things that Mr. Berwick has said and then don't allow the Senate to ask questions about that. I think that's something we ought to be concerned about.

We have a Supreme Court opinion, a recent Supreme Court opinion, that protected certain First Amendment rights of free speech, and this Congress and this administration immediately brought to this floor and shoved through on a partisan vote a bill called the DISCLOSE Act, which gives special free speech rights to some and bars other groups from having the same rights, which is in the face of a Supreme Court opinion that's taken place this summer. And so you have to say what is it about "no" that you don't understand? But you know, this is the way we are operating.

This administration has filed a lawsuit against the State of Arizona to try to block them from enforcing their laws and Federal laws with specific provisions against discrimination in any form or fashion, and profiling in any form or fashion, but to just try to save their State from the invasion that happens nightly and from the slaughter of American citizens that has happened over the last couple years, and the multiple slaughters across the border.

The administration's refused to defend the Republic against the most egregious violations of voting rights since the Civil Rights Act was passed. And we all saw them on television. It's kind of like we used to wonder how you were going to get the guy that shot Lee Harvey Oswald, ever get him a fair trial when the whole world saw the shooting on television. Well, the whole world saw these two guys, one with a club, standing out in front of a polling place, intimidating voters. And yet this administration says that they don't see any harm in that, and they are not going to enforce it.

So we are going to go through some of these things tonight and talk about them. And the first one I just brought up: the voting rights violations are ignored. Attorney General Eric Holder, who is right now very proud to be out suing the State of Arizona, dropped the case that, hey, I will ask you, if you can see this clearly, if you will look right there, you will see a club or a shillelagh or a baton, but it is, if you